

II. Responses of State VR Agencies and the category placement according to how each funds auxiliary aids.

Responses of State VR Agencies On Payment for Auxiliary Aids in Institutions of Higher Education

1. IHE's are fully responsible for the payment of auxiliary aids and access services and the VR agency is no longer funding these costs

Alaska

Colleges and the state universities in Alaska have accepted the responsibility for the provision of all auxiliary aids for students with disabilities. Since the IHE's accepted this responsibility, the number of DHH students grew and the quality of their services improved. VR pays for tuition, tutors, books, and supplies. No formal agreement is in place.

Delaware

This state has no formal cooperative agreements, but informal arrangements have IHE's paying for auxiliary aids in the classroom, and VR paying for auxiliary aids outside of the classroom. When the cooperative agreements are completed, this practice will be continued.

California

This State has cooperative agreements with the Community Colleges that they are the first responsibility to provide support services but we will assist them if there is a shortfall in funding. California VR requires that there be evidence of a significant funding shortfall for the entire college not just the Special Resource or Disabled Students Center. For example, one college informed us that their entire budget for the Special Resource Center was being wiped out due to an increase in the number of deaf students. However, this school was spending millions on improvements to their sports facilities and their football team. VR took the position that something has to change with funding priorities at the school.

Georgia

The Georgia Division of Rehabilitation Services moved to the Georgia Department of Labor on July 1, 2001 and has been working to update its cooperative agreements. Currently, our Vocational Rehabilitation Business Services Unit is working on an agreement between the Designated State Unit and the Institutions of Higher Education (IHE).

The IHE's are fully responsible for the payment of auxiliary aids and access services for consumers to access the IHE programs and the VR agency is no longer funding these costs.

Louisiana

Agreements are still under development. The state VR agency is trying to set up a work group of representatives from each College Board to begin the re-drafting the agreements. At the present time, all of the postsecondary programs in Louisiana are paying for support services, *with the exception of two universities that refuse*. LRS' policy is that VR will pay for support services in those two universities while the consumers pursue litigation.

Maryland

The state has no formal cooperative agreements yet, but informally, the IHE's are responsible for the cost of auxiliary aids and or accommodations in the classroom, while DORS will pay for auxiliary aids outside of the classroom. When cooperative agreements are completed with each college in the state, this understanding will be reinforced.

Michigan

Michigan has an interagency agreement with Postsecondary Services that addresses the funding of auxiliary aids at community colleges.

Basically the institutions of higher learning are responsible for the costs of accommodations for activities related to the student status such as class participation. Rehabilitation is generally responsible for providing the disability related supports outside of the classroom, such as hearing aids, medication needed to enable the individual to benefit from training or other activities that clearly lead to employment. Rehabilitation is not responsible for access or for accommodations that are required to ensure access to a program. occasionally, we cover some costs that are incurred by the college but this is unusual.

Michigan VR does not have any formal agreements with the 4 year universities. Generally, the 4 year colleges and universities follow the above stated policy of providing and funding needed accommodations. There is no one entity that can enter into signed agreements on behalf of all the universities and we are reluctant to negotiate individual agreements that differ from location to location.

Minnesota

Minnesota has an interagency agreement between the Minnesota Department of Economic Security through Rehabilitation Services Branch and the State Services for the Blind and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and The University of Minnesota. This agreement states that the Minnesota Department of Economic Security through Rehabilitation Services Branch and the State Services for the Blind will provide tuition support and assistance to students with such items as adaptive devices, technology and other materials. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and The University of Minnesota shall provide access to education and training opportunities to students with disabilities, including the provision of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. The State of Minnesota College and University system has set aside a fund for a number of years. This year (2002) it meets 65% of the interpreter costs for two-year colleges and has just begun a similar fund for state universities which is funded at 29%. This is intended to help defray the costs of interpreting services.

New Jersey (listed twice)

VR state agencies have an agreement to pay for the one half of the costs of all auxiliary aids in community colleges for VR consumers. For four-year institutions, the college pays 100% of these costs.

New York

New York has an interagency agreement in place. The IHE's cover auxiliary aids.

Nebraska

On July 1, 1996 Nebraska DVR stopped paying for auxiliary aids and service costs. The Nebraska VR state agency gave six months notice of intent not to pay any costs, and the Associate General Counsel of the Nebraska College system agreed that the University system would pay.

Ohio

This state has an agreement in place. The IHE's cover expenses for auxiliary aids.

Oklahoma

After lengthy discussions, Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services determined that the responsibility for accommodations in Oklahoma's public colleges and universities rests with the educational institutions.

Oklahoma's interagency agreement which has been in place for years, is renewed annually and signed by the director of the Department of Rehabilitation Services and the Chancellor for Higher Education, with each college and university president signing off on it as well.

Rhode Island

This State has an agreement in place. The IHE's cover expenses for auxiliary aids.

Texas

Agreements are still under development. No additional information is available at this time. The IHE's cover expenses for auxiliary aids.

Vermont

This State has an agreement in place. The IHE's cover expenses for auxiliary aids.

West Virginia

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is currently operating under an informal agreement that the provision of reasonable accommodations for such students will be the responsibility of the institution. A more formal agreement is still under development.

- 2. IHE's are fully responsible for payment of auxiliary aids and access services and the VR agency has a transition strategy to move towards 100% IHE responsibility, but is still engaged in providing some financial support.**

Wisconsin

The Wisconsin VR state agency changed their State plan to allow for up to 48 months to transition the payment of 504/ADA supports to a public entity (only if the VR state agency had a history of providing support for these auxiliary aids). This is being implemented through a one-year agreement which took effect July 1, 2002 and reduces the contribution from 100% (of FY 2001) to 80% funding. A cover letter from the Secretary of the Department of Workforce Development states that this one-year agreement is the beginning of the intent to transition 100% of the auxiliary aids costs to post-secondary partners. The Wisconsin VR state agency is beginning FY 2003 negotiations in October 2002.

Maine

The Maine Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) have completed a new agreement with the Maine University System. VR and DBVI will pay 25% of the cost of accommodations in the present school year 02/03 and next year 03/04, thereafter the University system will pick 100% of the cost of accommodations for students. A similar plan is being negotiated with the Maine Technical College System.

3. IHE's and VR agencies have "shared responsibility and an agreement or practice that reflects on-going commitment to contributions to the costs of auxiliary aids and access services.

Arizona

Arizona does not have an agreement. Currently Arizona DVR shares responsibility for auxiliary aids with IHE's.

Colorado

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) in Colorado currently has interagency agreements with five of the six Boards of public institutions of higher education in the state. In general, it is typically understood that the colleges, both public and private, have first responsibility to provide accommodations. If they cannot, or "enhanced accommodations" are requested, DVR can negotiate these on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, DVR will request that an institution put in writing any claim that an accommodations is an undue hardship. Finally, DVR and one local community college have entered into a matching funds agreement.

This pilot program establishes a Vocational Rehabilitation specialist position located within the college system to assure that DVR clients receive appropriate accommodations and that their educational programs are in keeping with their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). DVR and the community college will then split interpreter costs 50/50.

Florida

Agreements are still under development. At this time most public IHE's cover of auxiliary aids for any student with a disability, including VR clients. There were a few cases where we would negotiate or cover all or most of the costs.

Kansas

This State has no cooperative agreements, but the State VR agency is continuing to meet with the State Board of Regents. Currently, the State VR agency functions on old agreements. One such agreement is with Johnson County Community College (JCCC) and is based upon a per credit hour amount of \$346.00 for the three support services they offer: interpreting, tutoring & note taking. If a client is taking 12 credit hours times \$346.00, it equals \$4,152.00 per semester. This amount was proposed by JCCC in 1995 directly to the VR Deaf Unit and this became the agreement. It is considerably more cost effective than paying interpreters by an hourly rate as other colleges have requested. If no previous agreement is in place, we try to steer them to the JCCC model. The per credit fee is figured to be 50% of what the actual cost is to JCCC.

Idaho

Idaho has an agreement with the schools to share the cost of interpreters. The IHE's pay for auxiliary aids unless they are for use outside the classroom setting.

Illinois

Illinois Office of Rehabilitation Services is developing interagency agreements with various post-secondary programs throughout the state. Their intent is to ensure a shared responsibility of funding between ORS and higher education institution. For example the cooperative agreement with Blackhawk College, Chicago State University, Harold Washington College and other higher education institutions share 50%/50% of the interpreting expenses. A few, like Governors State University share costs, 60% / 40% with ORS paying 40%, and others share costs at 40% / 60% with ORS paying 60% for interpreting expenses.

Mississippi

The VR agency shares responsibility for auxiliary aids with the IHE.

Missouri

Missouri has no agreement in place at this time but are currently working to finalize an agreement with two year and four year public institutions. They currently work on a case by case basis and have a shared agreement of 50/50 payment of auxiliary aids for the VR and IHE's.

Montana

For Interpreters Services, Montana shares at a 50/50 rate with Institutions for Higher Education. C-Print and other technology aids, the universities have been covering 100%.

New Jersey (listed twice)

VR state agencies have an agreement to pay for the one half of the costs of all auxiliary aids in community colleges for VR consumers. For four year institutions, the IHE pays 100% of these costs.

North Carolina

This State has a written interagency agreement in place. Auxiliary aids are a shared responsibility for the VR agency and the IHE's in that state.

Puerto Rico

PRVRA developed an interagency agreement with a private post-secondary institution (Interamerican University) in 1999. This agreement stated that VR was responsible for payments of auxiliary services for daytime students such as interpreters and readers attending the university from 8:00 am to 4:30 p.m. The university's responsibilities for daytime students include the provision of tutors and notetakers. After 4:30 p.m., the university assumes responsibility for all services. At present, we are in the process of developing a draft interagency agreement with all universities that have students enrolled in their programs who are VR consumers. This interagency agreement could include joint fiscal responsibility for auxiliary services.

Virginia

The State Council of Higher Education of Virginia has no authority over the colleges. The state VR general and state VR blind agencies together have an agreement with the Virginia Community College System (23 colleges), but the two VR agencies only have individual signed agreements with 6 of the 15 public four-year institutions. They are working on obtaining the rest. VR will reimburse up to 40% of interpreting and CART services for VR students. The institutions will be responsible for the remaining 60% of the costs.

Washington

Has an agreement in place for a couple of years that basically states "negotiation is to be done on a case by case basis". At the current time, most of the schools do cover the cost of accommodations but the issue is surfacing again. Two years ago, they were not able to take it further at that time in terms of clarifying the financial responsibility. Washington has begun the development of a new agreement and will be meeting with the Presidents of IHE's throughout December. Results of these meetings will be known early next year.

Wyoming

Wyoming has a Memorandum of Understanding with the public Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) which addresses the provision of interpreting and CART services. The agreement was signed 12/14/2000 and will remain in effect until June 30, 2004. Basically, for auxiliary aids including interpreters and CART services used in the academic setting, for individuals with disabilities who are mutual clients of DVR and students at an IHE, the IHE will be responsible for half the cost, and DVR will be responsible for half the cost.

4. VR agencies provide 100% of the funding for auxiliary aids and access services for VR consumers.

Alabama

Agreements are still under development. They are about to sign a statewide uniform agreement where VR will pay 100% for interpreting only in classroom activities that are in the student's IPE.

Arkansas

A temporary arrangement has been developed to address service needs on an institution-by-institution basis. There are plans to develop a proposal to secure additional funds from the legislature that would be available directly to institutions providing interpreting services.

Hawaii

Hawaii has no cooperative agreements. The state VR agency covers all costs for auxiliary aid for VR clients attending postsecondary institutions. Colleges and universities pay for auxiliary aids if the individual is not a VR client. The only exception is the two institutions that have services for deaf and hard of hearing persons, are informally paying a portion of the cost. We are not close to developing an agreement. Several years ago Hawaii VR went through the state attorney general's office for a ruling and it was decided VR is responsible.

Indiana

Indiana provides 100% of the funding for auxiliary aids and accessibility services for VR consumers. They are currently attempting to change this arrangement.

Kentucky

Kentucky has state appropriated funds to cover 100% the costs of auxiliary aids in postsecondary institutions. The Kentucky Department of Vocational Rehabilitation manages this "central pot" of state funding that reimburses public postsecondary institutions for support services to deaf and hard of hearing students. The State VR agency works closely with institutions in Kentucky to identify needs and develop strategies for providing services to students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Guidelines have been developed on the how reimbursement is provided to Kentucky postsecondary institutions for interpreters, notetakers, etc.

New Hampshire

New Hampshire is in the final stages of getting an agreement signed with both private and public, 2 year and 4 year institutions. It states that VR will schedule and pay for auxiliary aids, such as interpreters, C-Print, and CART for its customers that are attending colleges. Colleges are responsible for those services for courses and activities that are not related to the student's vocational goals.

New Mexico

Agreements are still under development. New Mexico is looking at writing one agreement, for both two-year and four-year institutions of higher education.

Oregon

Agreements are still under development. The VR state agency is currently "at the table" with the community colleges and universities (separately). As of this writing, the VR agency covers expenses for auxiliary aids.

South Carolina

Agreements are still under development. No additional information is available at this time. The VR agency covers expenses for auxiliary aids.

Tennessee

Agreements are still under development. No additional information is available at this time. The VR agency covers expenses for auxiliary aids.